

UNITED STATES SENATOR • IOWA

CHUCK GRASSLEY

<http://grassley.senate.gov>
press@grassley.senate.gov

Contact: Jill Kozeny, 202/224-1308
Jill Gerber, 202/224-6522

For Immediate Release

Thursday, June 21, 2001

Senate Committee Reviews Nomination of Eastern Iowa Native

WASHINGTON — A Senate Committee today reviewed President Bush's nomination of an Eastern Iowa native to serve as the top agricultural negotiator for the U.S. Trade Representative.

Allen F. Johnson, originally from Long Grove in Scott County, was tapped for this post in April by President Bush. Following today's hearing, members of the Finance Committee must vote to approve Johnson's nomination. He must also be approved by the full Senate.

Grassley worked several years ago to create the special agricultural negotiator position which Johnson will hold. Grassley said it was needed to ensure that agriculture's interests were fully understood and represented by the office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

"The fact that President Bush selected an outstanding individual like Al Johnson to take on this job shows that he understands the importance of trade to America's farmers," Grassley said. "Al Johnson is highly qualified to deal with the difficult challenges facing agriculture at the negotiating table, and I look forward to his strong and effective representation for farmers in Iowa and across the country."

Johnson served as Grassley's agricultural policy advisor from 1985 to 1987. Most recently, Johnson led the National Oilseed Processors Association in Washington, D.C.

Iowa ships \$3.2 billion worth of agricultural products to foreign markets every year. "U.S. trade policies and the ability of the President and his negotiators to resolve trade disputes and reach new agreements have a dramatic impact on the family farmer's bottom line. Washington needs to work aggressively to open new markets for farm products both at home and abroad," Grassley said.

A copy of the statement Johnson made today to the Finance Committee follows this page.